

For Immediate Release

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*Washington, D.C.* -- Today, Congressman Sires attended a House Committee on Foreign Affairs hearing to discuss President Obama's Fiscal Year 2011 budget request and the global initiatives at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah testified at the hearing about the agency's work and its role in U.S. foreign policy and national security. Administrator Shah was sworn in on December 16, 2009.

"I was impressed with the knowledge and professional conduct of Administrator Shah at today's hearing," said Congressman Sires. "He has already shown excellent leadership in overseeing the United State's response to the humanitarian crisis in Haiti and I am looking forward to seeing what he can accomplish at USAID."

At the hearing, Administrator Shah responded to several development concerns and touched on the Obama Administration's proposal to overcome these challenges, including the Global Health Initiative (GHI). GHI, announced in May 2009, is a six year funding program to improve U.S. global health programs and their coordination. In response to the rollout of the GHI, Congressman Sires submitted a question to Administrator Shah regarding health innovations within USAID and the role of health technology development in GHI.

In Congress, Congressman Sires has introduced legislation, H.R. 3560, the 21st Century Global Health Technology Act, to authorize a program at USAID that funds research initiatives to encourage the development of health products that are affordable, culturally appropriate, and easy to use in low-resource health systems. H.R. 3560 would help to address health needs around the world, reduce the threat of pandemic diseases, and improve stability in developing countries.

"I was pleased to hear President Obama's plan to invest in the Global Health Initiative to help partner countries improve their health care and it is my hope that USAID will continue to invest in innovation and development of new technologies that can change the landscape of global health," stated the Congressman.

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